

FMCSA Docket No. FMCSA-2002-13
U.S. Department of Transportation
Dockets Management Facility, Rm PL-401
400 Seventh Str., SW
Washington, DC 20590-0001

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing you today to urge the Department of Transportation to approve Oregon's application for a two-year waiver with automatic review from the requirement that our farm trucks be inspected by ODOT for compliance with federal motor safety regulations.

Why? Because ODOR already has the authority to inspect for state regulations and it is unnecessary for the federal government to require a redundant inspection process. There are a host of other reasons why this is not needed;

1. Oregon's farm trucks are involved in less than 1% of all truck accidents in Oregon.
2. Oregon's farm trucks are used usually for very short periods during the summer months to haul their own crops to a processing or shipping facility. Most of these trucks are small 10,000 lbs vehicles.
3. Oregon's farm trucks are usually traveling at very slow speeds when loaded on less traveled rural roads

These are just a few of the reasons why our ODOT took Secretary Mineta's suggestion to our U.S. Senator Wyden to apply for a waiver from this requirement. There are certainly many more which others will make to your organization soon.

I was asked by the Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives to chair a task force to look at this issue. As a state representative and a fifth generation Oregon farmer, I am uniquely qualified to understand this complex and important issue and the proper person to lead this task force.

In the course of our work, we ultimately settled on the outcome of reaching an agreement with your department that allows ODOT to continue to regulate farm trucks in the same successful manner as they have since 1978. This agreement would automatically be reviewed every two years to make certain that we at the state level are doing our part for farm truck safety.

It is my sincere hope that you will carefully consider our request and find in Oregon's favor that we have an excellent safety record for farm trucks and we should be allowed the flexibility from your department to continue with that success.

Thank you,
Representative Jeff Kropf
Oregon House District 17